

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 EUR-10 MC-02 SAJ-01

SPC-01 PM-03 L-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

DODE-00 EB-03 OMB-01 TRSE-00 H-01 DRC-01 /071 W

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R 051709Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8017

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 LIMA 8893

LIMDIS

EO 11652 XGDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PE, US, CI, UR

SUBJECT: PERUVIAN PURCHASE OF SOVIET ARMS:

U.S. POLICY RESPONSE

1. THIS CABLE ADDRESSES ITSELF TO USG RESPONSE TO PERU'S HAVING MADE A MAJOR PURCHASE OF SOVIET ARMS. AFTER REVIEWING SOME OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOVIET SALE FOR PERU AND LATIN AMERICA, WE DISCUSS THREE POSSIBLE POLICY ALTERNATIVES. AT ONE END, USG MIGHT SIMPLY DOWNPLAY THE SOVIET SALE AND COMPETE MORE AGGRESSIVELY FOR PERUVIAN ARMS PURCHASES IN THE FUTURE. THE OTHER EXTREME WOULD BE TO ADOPT A CRITICAL PUBLIC ATTITUDE TOWARD GOP MIXED WITH SANCTIONS IN THE HOPE OF A CHANGE OF PERUVIAN POLICIES OR RULERS. A DAMAGE-LIMITING POLICY REPRESENTS A MIDDLE COURSE. THIS WOULD INVOLVE BILATERAL, HIGH-LEVEL TALKS WITH THE GOP AIMED AT DISCOURAGING FUTURE SOVIET PURCHASES, POSSIBLE COUNTERMEASURES IN CHILE SUCH AS THE SALE OF M-YP TANKS, AND REGISTERING OUR DISAPPROVAL WITH THE USSR, OR AT LEAST TRYING TO GET THE SOVIETS TO LIMIT THE PROVISION OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY TO LATIN AMERICA. WHATEVER COURSE OR COMBINATION OF COURSES IS CHOSEN,

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CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PROTECT U.S. INVESETMENT

IN AND ACCESS TO PERUVIAN MINERALS SUCH AS PETROLEUM AND COOPER.

2. IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET ARMS ARRIVAL:

A. AFTER CUBA, PERU BECOMES SECOND COUNTRY IN WESTERN HEMISPHERE TO ACQUIRE IMPRESSIVE SOVIET WEAPONRY.

B. SOVIETS WILL HAVE NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO INFLUENCE PERUVIAN OFFICERS WHO WILL BE TRAINED IN OPERATING AND MAINTAINING SOVIET WEAPONRY. WITH PERU RULED BY MILITARY, SOVIETS WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO AFFECT PERUVIAN POLICY. (IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THA THE PURCHASE OF SOVIET TANKS DOES NOT REQUIRE THE CONTINUING TECHNOLOGY AND SUPPORT THAT OTHER TECHNICAL ARMAMENTS DO. THE INTRODUCTION OF SOVIET TANKS TO PERU WILL ENTAIL FAF FEWER SOVIET TECHNICIANS THAN DO CIVILIAN VENTURES SUCH AS THE PAITA FISHING PROJECT OR OLMOS HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME.)

C. SOVIETS MAY SEEK TO ESTABLISH PERMANENT MILITARY MISSION AS CONTRASTED WITH TDY MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTORS.

D. CUBA, WITH WHOM PERU HAS GOOD RELATIONS, HAS PROBABLY BEEN DESIGNATED BY THE SOVIETS TO PROVIDE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO PERU AND POSSIBLY HELP WITH TRAINING. THE LATTER IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE PERU APPEARS TO BE LOOKING FOR WAYS THAT WILL GUARANTEE MILITARY LOGISTICAL SUPPORT; CUBA COULD BECOME THE LATIN FUNNEL TO ISOLATED PERU.

3. WITH SOVIET AND CUBAN BACKING, THE PERUVIANS MAY BE TEMPTED TO ADOPT A MORE REVANCHIST ATTITUDE TOWARD TRADITIONAL ENEMY CHILE. IT SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN THAT RECOVERY OF PROVINCES LOST TO CHILE IN 1879 WAR OF THE PACIFIC REMAINS AN OBSESSION AMONG PERUVIANS, AND PARTICULARLY THE MILITARY.

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F. IN CONNECTION WITH ITS NON-ALIGNED, THIRD WORLD POSTURE, PERU MIGHT CONCEIVABLY DENOUNCE THE RIO TREATY (THOUGH FINMIN DENIED SUCH INTENTIONS TO AMBASSADOR JOVA AT THE JUST CONCLUDED OAS SESSION IN LIMA).

G. IN LATIN AMERICA, THE SALES OF ARMS TO PERU MAY TRIGGER SOVIET ARMS SALES ELSEWHERE, PARTICULARLY

IF THE UNITED STATES REFUSES TO FURNISH EQUIVALENT
WEAPONRY TO LATIN ARMED FORCES.

H. IN CHILE, THE MOST IMMEDIATE EFFECT WILL PROBABLY
BE AN URGENT REQUEST FROM THE MILITARY FOR M-16 TANKS
AND OTHER ARMS. THIS COULD LEAD TO A PERUVIAN-
CHILEAN ARMS RACE WITH THE SOVIETS AND AMERICANS
RESPECTIVELY BACKING LIMA AND SANTIAGO.

7. ECONOMIC INTERESTS AT PLAY. THERE SHOULD NOT BE
LOSS OF \$750 MILLION INVESTED BY US COMPANIES IN
PERU, MOSTLY IN MINING (COPPER, LEAD AND ZINC).
FURTHER SIZEABLE AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN MINING AND
PETROLEUM IS ALSO EXPECTED AND WILL BE ACCOMPANIED
BY SIGNIFICANT EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES.

8. FIRST OPTION: DOWNPLAY SALE AND SELL MORE
AGGRESSIVELY IN FUTURE. THIS OPTION ACCEPTS SOVIET
MILITARY SALES TO PERU AS THE LOGICAL OUTGROWTH OF
DETENTE AND SOVIET INROADS IN LATIN AMERICA INTO THE
ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL
FIELDS. THE UNITED STATES WOULD FACE UP TO THE FACT
THAT LATIN AMERICA IS NO LONGER CLOSED TO THINGS
RUSSIAN (OR COMMUNIST). RATHER THAN CAUTIONING
PERU RE ITS ACTIONS AND WARNING OTHER LATINOS NOT TO
FOLLOW THE SAME COURSE, THIS OPTION WOULD HAVE THE
US DOWNPLAY THE SOVIET SALE, RECOGNIZE THAT USG
RESTRICTIVE POLICIES AND CONGRESSIONAL AMENDMENTS
CONTRIBUTED TO THE SOVIET SALE, AND USE THE SALE TO
ENERGIZE AND LIBERALIZE US ARMS SALES AND CREDITS
TO LATIN AMERICA. THE SALE OF M-60 TANKS TO CHILE
AND OTHER LATINOS WOULD APPEAR PARTICULARLY JUSTIFIABLE.
ONCE THE PRESS REPORTED ON THE ARRIVAL OF SOVIET
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TANKS IN PERU, THE USG WOULD NOTE PUBLICLY THAT
THESE ARE THE ONLY TANKS AVAILABLE

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8018

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 LIMA 8893/2

LIMDIS

9. THE PROS:

A. ACCEPTS THE SOVIET SALE, WHICH WE CANNOT UNDO
IN ANY CASE.

B. ENCOURAGES MORE AGGRESSIVE US COMMERCIAL
POLICY IN ARMS FIELD.

C. AVOIDS PERUVIAN ACCUSATIONS THAT WE ARE
INTERFERING IN THEIR AFFAIRS BY CRITICIZING OR
COMMENTING UPON THEIR SOVIEREIGN RIGHT TO BUY SOVIET
OR ANY OTHER ARMS.

D. KEEPS OUR CHANNELS OPEN TO MILGOV OFFICERS
FOR CONTINUING COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN MILITARY
ASSISTANCE AND ECONOMIC FIELD.

E. WILL NOT JEOPARDIZE US ECONOMIC INTERESTS OR
ONGOING US-PERUVIAN EFFORTS TO SETTLE INVESTMENT
DISPUTES.

10. THE CONS:

A. MAY ENCOURAGE FURTHER PERUVIAN ARMS PURCHASES

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AND OTHER AGREEMENTS WITH THE SOVIETS.

B. MAY SIGNAL LACK OF CONCERN USG IF SOVIETS SELL
ARMS TO LATIN AMERICA, AND ENCOURAGE LATTER TO
STEP UP THEIR MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE AREA.

C. US SILENCE WOULD DISMAY ANTI-MILGOV PERUVIANS
AND CONSERVATIVE SOUTH AMERICAN STATES, SUGGESTING
AMERICAN DISINTEREST IN LATIN AMERICA.

D. CONGRESS AND CERTAIN PUBLIC SECTORS MIGHT
ACCUSE THE ADMINISTRATION OF PERMITTING A "SECOND
CUBA" IN PERU.

11. SECOND OPTION: TAKE NOTICE OF TANK PURCHASE

AND SEEK ACTIVELY TO LIMIT FURTHER SOVIET ARMS SALES. WHILE ACCEPTING THE SOVIET SALE OF TANKS AND POSSIBLY ARTILLERY TO THE PERUVIAN ARMY AS A FAIT ACCOMPLI, THE USG WOULD TAKE A SERIES OF STEPS AIMED AT DISSUADING PERU FROM FURTHER PURCHASES OF SOVIET WEAPONRY AND AT REASSURING PERU'S NEIGHBORS. UNLIKE THE FIRST OPTION, WE WOULD NOT RPT NOT MINIMIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOVIET SALE. BUT WE WOULD USE IT TO JUSTIFY MORE LIBERAL ARMS SALES TO PERU AND LATIN AMERICA AS IN OPTION ONE. IN ADDITION, WE COULD (A) MAKE DIPLOMATIC APPROACHES IN LIMA; (B) PLAY ON PERUVIAN FEARS OF CHILE; (C, D) APPROACH OTHER LATINS; (E) HAVE THE DEPARTMENT CALL IN THE PERUVIAN CHARGE AND ATTACHES; AND (F) RAISE THE MATTER WITH THE USSR.

A. LIMA APPROACH. THE AMBASSADOR COULD APPROACH THE GOP AT A HIGH LEVEL, PREFERABLY PRESIDENT VELASCO, NOTING THAT THE NEWS OF THE PERUVIAN PURCHASE HAS (OR WILL HAVE) SIGNIFICANT IMPACT UPON AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION. WHILE ACCEPTING PERU'S SOVEREIGN DECISION TO BUY ARMS FROM WHEREVER IT CHOOSES, THE AMBASSADOR WOULD ASK WHY PERU BOUGHT SOVIET TANKS AND WHY HAD THEY BEEN IMPORTED SO SECRETIVELY. WE WOULD SEEK TO ASCERTAIN PERU'S FUTURE INTENTIONS AND NOTE OUR CONCERN ABOUT AN ARMS RACE WITH CHILE. MENTION MIGHT ALSO BE MADE ABOUT

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THE EFFECT THAT CONTINUED SOVIET ARMS PURCHASES WOULD HAVE ON THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, CONGRESS AND, LOGICALLY, OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

B. CHILEAN GAMBIT. AN INTEGRAL PART OF ANY APPROACH IN LIMA WOULD BE TO PLAY ON PERUVIAN FEARS OF CHILE AND MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE PERUVIANS MAY BE GIVING THE USG LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO SUPPORT CHILE IN THE CASE OF AN ARMS RACE. PERUVIAN LEADERS WOULD BE TOLD SPECIFICALLY THAT THEY HAVE MADE IT VERY DIFFICULT FOR US TO REFUSE SALE OF M-60 TANKS TO CHILE. WHILE SUCH ARGUMENTS MIGHT HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON PRESIDENT VELASCO, OTHER PERUVIAN OFFICERS MIGHT BE DISMAYED AT PERU'S OPTING FOR DISTANT, UNKNOWN SOVIET MILITARY HELP. CURRENT DOMESTIC TROUBLES WHICH REQUIRED MILITARY INTERVENTION IN AREQUIPA, CUZCO AND PUNO, MAY MAKE THE PERUVIAN MILITARY WARY OVER PATH CHOSEN BY VELASCO GOVERNMENT.

C. ARGENTINE HELP. USG DEMARCHE TO PERUVIANS WOULD BE GREATLY REINFORCED IF ARGENTINES COULD BE PERSUADED TO VOICE CONCERN TO PERUVIAN MILITARY

ESTABLISHMENT OVER INTRODUCTION SOVIET ARMAMENT INTO SOUTH AMERICA. ARGENTINA HAS TRADITIONALLY CLOSE TIES, INDEED A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERUVIAN MILITARY HIERARCHY. AN APPROACH BY THE ARGENTINES WOULD EMPHASIZE PERU'S ISOLATION TO GEO-POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS PERUVIANS. THE ARGENTINES MIGHT ALSO VOICE THEIR PLAUSIBLE CONCERN THAT THE PERUVIAN PURCHASE OF SOVIET TANKS INCREASES THE LIKELIHOOD THAT CHILE WILL RECEIVE AMERICAN TANKS, SOMETHING THAT NEIGHBORING ARGENTINA AND PERU DO NOT WANT.

D. THE USG MAY ALSO WISH TO CONSULT WITH THE BRAZILIANS CONCERNING PERU'S PURCHASE AND HOW TO DISCOURAGE FUTURE SOVIT ARMS SALES. OUR EMBASSIES IN BOGOTA, LA PAZ, QUITO AND SANTIAGO MIGHT ALSO BRIEF THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS ON PERU'S ACQUISITIONS, THEREBY PRECLUDING AN EXAGGERATION OF PERU'S

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ACTIONS BUT MANIFESTING OUR CONCERN OVER THIS TURN OF EVENTS.

E. WASHINGTON DIPLOMACY. WHILE APPROACHES ARE BEING MADE IN LIMA AND POSSIBLY OTHER ARA CAPITALS, THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH USG VIEWS PERUVIAN ACTIONS WOULD BE UNDERLINED BY THE DEPARTMENT'S CALLING IN THE PERUVIAN CHARGE AND POSSIBLY THE THREE SERVICE ATTACHES.

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 EUR-10 PM-03 L-02

MC-02 SAJ-01 SPC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

DODE-00 EB-03 OMB-01 H-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /071 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8019

S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF 3 LIMA 8893/3

LIMDIS

D. AS IN THE FIRST OPTION, A LESS RESTRICTIVE
US ARMS POLICY MIGHT ALLOW US TO RECAPTURE THE
PERUVIAN ARMS MARKET.

E. CONGRESS COULD BE INFORMED CONFIDENTIALLY OF
US DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS DESIGNED TO CURB SOVIET MILITARY
SALES.

F. OUR LATIN AMERICAN FRIENDS WOULD BE REASSURED
IF WE SHARED INTELLIGENCE ON PERU'S PURCHASES WITH
THEM AND TOLD THEM OF OUR INTENTIONS TO TRY TO DISCOURAGE
AN ARMS RACE IN THE AREA.

13. THE DISADVANTAGES ARE:

A. IF THE DEMARCHE IS MADE AT THE PRESIDENTIAL
LEVEL, OR AT ANY HIGH LEVEL, THE GOP MIGHT REACT
PUBLICLY, ACCUSE THE US OF INTERFERING IN PERU'S
AFFAIRS AND THEREBY GAIN NATIONALISTIC PERUVIAN (AND
OTHER LATIN) SUPPORT FOR THE PURCHASE OF SOVIET ARMS.

B. THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, UNAWARE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL
DIPLOMACY OUTLINED IN THIS OPTION, MAY ACCUSE THE
ADMINISTRATION OF PERMITTING PERU TO GO CUBA'S WAY.

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14. THIRD OPTION. CRITICAL PUBLIC ATTITUDE AND
SANCTIONS. THIS OPTION WOULD HAVE THE USG PUBLICLY
CRITICIZE THE SOVIET UNION FOR SELLING SOPHISTICATED
TANKS TO PERU, THEREBY INITIATING AN ARMS RACE IN THE
AREA. THE USG WOULD ANNOUNCE ITS INTENTION TO ASSIST
PERU'S NEIGHBORS OBTAIN WEAPONS SIMILAR TO THOSE SOLD
BY THE USSR. IN ADDITION, THE USG MIGHT FURTHER
RESTRICT BILATERAL ASSISTANCE AND VOTE AGAINST MULTI-
LATERAL ASSISTANCE TO PERU. THE SOVIETS WOULD BE
INFORMED OF USG DISPLEASURE AND AN EFFORT MADE TO
CONVINCE THEM TO HALT FURTHER ARMS DELIVERIES TO PERU.

15. THE PROS:

A. THIS WOULD SHOW THE AMERICAN PUBLIC THAT THE
UNITED STATES IS DOING SOMETHING ABOUT PERU.

B. IT WOULD PLEASE LATIN AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE
REGIMES AND PERUVIAN OPPONENTS OF THE VELASCO GOVERNMENT.

D. IT MIGHT HALT SOVIET ARMS SALES TO PERU.

D. MORE STRINGENT ECONOMIC COUNTERMEASURES THAN
THOSE NOW IN EFFECT MIGHT RESULT IN A DETERIORATION
OF THE PERUVIAN ECONOMY AND POSSIBLY BRING ABOUT A
GOVERNMENT MORE TO THE LIKING OF THE U.S.

16. ON THE OTHER HAND:

- A. A HOSTILE US PUBLIC REACTION MIGHT RALLY PERUVIANS ROUND VELASCO--AT A TIME WHEN DISCONTENT WITH THE REGIME IS ALREADY AT A HPYH POINT.
 - B. US INVESTMENT IN AND ACCESS TO RAW MATERIALS WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED.
 - C. ECONOMIC COUNTERMEASURES APPLIED IN THE PAST TEN YEARS AGAINST PERU HAVE NOT WORKED AND HAVE ACTUALLY DAMAGED U.S. INTERESTS HERE.
 - D. THE US MIGHT LOSE ITS ENTREE INTO AND SALES TO THE PERUVIAN ARMED FORCES.
 - E. THE PERUVIAN SITUATION IS UNLIKE THE CHILEAN SITUATION BECAUSE THE MILITARY ARE IN FIRM CONTROL HERE.
 - F. ANY HOSTILE US REACTION MIGHT FURTHER RADICALIZE THE PERUVIAN REGIME.
 - G. THE SOVIETS MIGHT IGNORE OUR OBJECTIONS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION TO SELL MORE ARMS TO
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PERU AND PROMISE OTHER SUPPORT IF THE UNITED STATES ADOPTS A HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARD PERU.

17. A. SUMMING UP, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE USG SHOULD NOT OVER-REACT TO THE PURCHASE OF SOVIET ARMS BY PERU. HAD OUR ARMS SUPPLY POLICIES BEEN MORE LIBERAL IN RECENT YEARS, THE PRESENT TURN OF EVENTS MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN AVOIDED. IN ANY CASE, THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF OUR POLICY SHOULD BE TO TRY TO PERSUADE PERU TO LIMIT FUTURE PURCHASES OF SOVIET ARMS. AT THE SAME TIME, IT BEHOOVES THE UNITED STATES TO LIFT RESTRICTIONS ON US ARMS SALES OR WE SHALL CONTINUE TO LOSE SUCH SALES TO THE USSR AND EUROPEANS.
- B. EVEN IF US LEGISLATION WILL NOT PERMIT LIBERALIZED ARMS SALES POLICIES IN PERU AND LATIN AMERICAN, WE SHOULD AT LEAST NOT TAKE OVERT ACTIONS WHICH MAY JEOPARDIZE OUR ECONOMIC INTERESTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MILITARY PROCUREMENT, ARMS, EAST WEST TRADE, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LIMA08893
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P740135-0381, P740134-2332
From: LIMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731244/aaaabggs.tel
Line Count: 426
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 8
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <08 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PERUVIAN PURCHASE OF SOVIET ARMS: U S POLICY RESPONSE
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PE, US, CI, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005